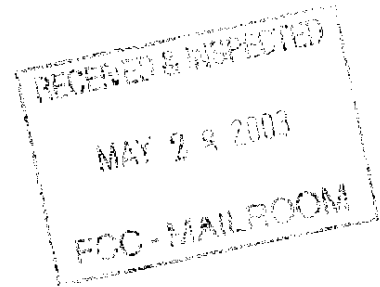


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OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
DIOCESE OF BUFFALO
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May 22, 2003



Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th St., S.W.
Room TW-204B
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Informal Comments, MB Dkt. No. 02-277;
MM Dkt. No. 01-235; MM Dkt. No. 01-317;
MM Dkt. No. 00-244**

Dear Ms. Secretary:

The Diocese of Buffalo submits the following informal comments in the above-referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, released September 23, 2002.

The Diocese of Buffalo has long been concerned about the erosion of local news and public affairs programming caused by the FCC's and Congress weakening of broadcast ownership limits, and the FCC's elimination of broadcast rules which formerly had permitted the FCC and the community to monitor broadcasters to help ensure that broadcasters served their community of license with programs which meet community needs and interests.

In our diocese, locally produced and locally directed religious programming, although wanted by the community, has been significantly reduced, in many cases replaced by syndicated talk shows and infomercials.

The Diocese urges the FCC to refrain from making changes in the current rules which (a) prohibit cross-ownership of broadcast stations and newspapers in the same community, (b) limit the number of television and radio stations a single entity may own in a single community, (c) set a national ownership cap for television station at an already overly generous 35% of households, and (d) prohibit common ownership of major television networks.

Ms. M. Johnson
DIOCESE

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Prior to joining the Diocese of Buffalo, I spent more than 20 years in radio and television and experienced firsthand the negative impact on the community when outside interests took control of a significant portion of the airwaves. Community interests are rarely a consideration for these broadcasters.

Changes in ownership rules have also decreased competition. Here in Buffalo, there is only one commercial AM radio station airing local news. The community is not well served when there is no competition for news coverage. Please do not allow what has happened to radio to happen to television.

The same companies that dominate television and satellite systems and the programming on those systems already dominate cable television, and those same companies are moving into providing Internet access. Neither cable nor the Internet (whether offered through cable or telephone companies) offer meaningful alternatives to the already scarce supply of truly local news and local public affairs programs on over-the-air television and radio.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kevin A. Keenan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

KEVIN A. KEENAN
Director of Communications

cc: Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hillary Clinton
Congressman Jack Quinn
Congressman Amory Houghton
Congressman Thomas Reynolds
Congresswoman Louise Slaughter